

May 19, 2010

Abuse/Neglect of Adults Who Are Vulnerable Study Group

Background

Washington State remains a leader in long-term supports and services delivery and continues to prepare to meet the needs of our growing population of seniors and people with disabilities by improving the quality of care they receive in all settings.

As the population of adults who are vulnerable expands, we find our resources continuously stretched. Our long-term supports and services system is challenged to assure the quality and capacity of the abuse and neglect response system for adults who are vulnerable. An effective system is a shared responsibility of consumers, families, state employees, communities, mandatory reporters, advocates, law enforcement and others. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is committed to working with a broad group of interested parties to produce a road map that will guide us now and into the future.

Study Group Charge Statement

To support the action plan, DSHS is convening a study group consisting of broad representation from community members, Tribal Nations, the legal community, DSHS staff, mandatory reporters, advocates, providers, regulators, and members of law enforcement.

To address the need for continuous improvement of our abuse and neglect response system for adults who are vulnerable, this group shall:

- Research and discuss practices identified by the group that impact the quality and capacity of our system;
- Identify what practices other states have found effective;
- Recommend system and program changes
- Explore statutory changes necessary for implementation of recommendations.
- Identify resource and funding opportunities such as the Elder Justice Act and Health and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA – Health Care Reform)
- Recommend actions for informing and empowering consumers

The group will prioritize all solutions; those that can be implemented within current budget constraints and limited resources, as well as solutions that could require new resources.

This study group will convene for three to four meetings to work through the items listed above and will produce concrete next steps toward implementation. The recommendations will be presented to the Secretary no later than September 15, 2010.

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